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ABSTRACT

The planning and operation of Jefferson County (Colorado) Public Schools' foreign language camps are described. The weekend-long camps attempt to duplicate an authentic cultural experience in a foreign village through cultural activities and language immersion. French, Spanish, Russian, and German camps are conducted for county high school foreign language students. Activities such as cooking of foreign cuisine, crafts, singing, and shopping are all conducted in the target language. Teachers and native speakers assist in creating the atmosphere and experience. Participation in the camp weekends is voluntary and available at a low cost to each student. Format, planning and budget considerations, goals, and evaluation procedures are summarized. Response to the camps since their 1970 inception has been favorable and has led to increased foreign language enrollments. An evaluation instrument, a planning handout, and the 1982 financial reports for each of the four camp sessions are appended. (RW)

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A SPECIAL REPORT

PREPARED FOR THE

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER

FOREIGN LANGUAGE CAMPS

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS R-1

Lakewood, Colorado

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This is an overview of the Foreign Language Camps effort in Jefferson County R-1. The contents are:

I. Introduction

II. Description of Language Camps

- A. Raison d'être
- B. Planning
- C. Format
- D. Goals

III. Budget considerations

IV. Evaluation

Appendices

I. Planning handout

II. 1982 Financial reports:

- A. French Camp
- B. Spanish Camp
- C. Russian Camp
- D. German Camp

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I. Introduction

FOREIGN LANGUAGE CAMPS

Foreign language camps were pioneered as an innovative approach to supplementing classroom instruction in the four modern foreign languages taught in Jefferson County Public Schools. The first language camps were held in the fall of 1969. They were conceived to give an authentic cultural experience to the participants by total immersion in the language. Foreign language usage and cultural goals were attained during the three-day sojourn, along with many enthusiastic reactions toward learning a second language. The establishing of traditions, the fun of competitions, the tasting of new cuisine, the camaraderie of singing and folkdancing have all created in the minds and hearts of our students an unforgettable experience in their foreign language involvement.

In Jefferson County, Colorado, a Denver Metropolitan area, weekend foreign language camps in the mountains are helping to make language study more exciting by bringing distant lands a little closer. The camps began in late 1970 when the county's Russian teachers got permission to turn a mountain ranch complex owned by the school district, into a temporary foreign language camp. The teachers sent letters of invitation to all of the county's high school Russian classes and to all the Russian-speaking residents and professors in the area. The response was good, and in the next several weeks the teachers spent some late evenings drawing up two days' worth of Russian menus and activities and making banners, flags, costumes, Russian language signs, "passports", and "radio-broadcast" tapes. Finally the ancient village of Sosnovka appeared at the ranch one busy Friday.

The next afternoon, the students arrived by bus. A local police car blocked their road at a state fish and game inspection point, three miles from camp, allowing the Russian border guards, dressed in rented costumes, to inspect all luggage and documents and give welcoming speeches in Russian. The buses' license plates were changed, and the students went on to the Immigration Office to receive their visitors' documents (pleas to speak only Russian, schedules, and camp regulations) and their "hotel" assignments. These bureaucratic hassles took students at least one hour of sometimes agitated Russian to complete, but finally they were officially welcomed to Sosnovka in a long and dramatic speech by the newly-appointed commissar, a university professor.

The same entry procedures are now used in all the village camps- El Pinar, Tannenheim, Val-les-Pins, and Sosnovka - with suitable ethnic variations and costuming. Sometimes "contraband" is planted in students' luggage, causing great uproars and even some good-natured roughing-up of suspicious characters. Approximately 150 students go to each camp, along with 20 to 30 teachers and 10 to 20 native speakers. One native speaker is appointed mayor of each village, and teachers occasionally play the roles of parish priests or gendarmes. The German, French, and Spanish camps are each held on different weekends in the spring, while the Russian camp is held in winter.

In the camps, displays of photographs, realia, posters, artwork, and foreign language signs are everywhere; even Smokey the Bear becomes *Medved* in Sosnovka. Selected feature-length foreign language films are shown almost continuously, and colorful ethnic markets, cafés, and tea rooms sell pastries, espresso, food, perfumes, and souvenirs as well as craftwork made by the schools' language clubs. Some villagers while away the afternoons in the cafes, talking in the foreign language. Others help the teachers and food service staff in the kitchens, preparing *piroski, allouette sans tete, paella, auschnit,* and other foreign foods. At any one time, there are seven to fifteen different activities going on in the foreign language - macrame, lectures and discussions, card games, "Bebe Foot", soccer, scrabble, painting ceramic tiles, *boules*, weaving, Ukranian Easter egg painting, chess tournaments, painting copies of Limoges patterns on paper plates, *Cordon Bleu* baking, candle-dipping, silkscreen painting, folk-dancing, or rap sessions. At Val-les-Pins, an artist-in-residence does caricatures, and a couple of

students have made *cidre à la Normandie* with an old apple press. There is a piano in the main building with at least one piano player usually on hand and foreign language songsheets scattered around for people who want to sing along.

The teachers are almost constantly involved with the students, sharing in the activities, telling them about their own experiences in the foreign cultures, or making up histories and legends about the villages. St. Denis de la Tour, for instance, struck the drought-stricken earth with his staff two centuries ago and brought forth a spring whose holy waters still cure the aches of sincere pilgrims to Val-les-Pins. San Marcelino found a cave full of red wine that lasted El Pinar 300 years! In gratitude the two saints are included frequently in the campers' painting and drawings. The villagers of Val-les-Pins also hold somewhat sacred an old pottery kiln that is "in fact" the ruins of a once-glorious cathedral whose cemetery, recently resurrected by the villagers, shows the horrors of the 80-year war with "Tannenheim."

The festivities on Saturday nights are the high points of village life. Students learn folk dances during the afternoon, and, after an elegant dinner, put on a show. Saturday nights wind up with a discotheque, and Sunday, after a lazy lunch, the villagers return to their homes.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Foreign language students at any level in all 33 secondary schools in Jefferson County. Participation is voluntary. Foreign language enrollments in the county's schools have increased since the program began.

FUNDING AND COSTS: The cost for each teacher and student is approximately $27.50, including round-trip transportation by school bus. Native speakers and guests are given room and board. Each camp usually rents one or two feature films with camp fees.

II. Description of Language Camps

The original concept of having a Foreign Language Camp where students, teachers and invited guests could intermingle evolved in establishing a typical foreign village, as authentic as possible. There are native speakers, teachers playing various village roles, and with an ambience which creates the illusion of being in a real foreign setting.

The village personnel includes upper level high school students who direct and guide the activities of the camp; teachers who oversee each project; village personalities who create the atmosphere of the village and the travelers who visit the village and participate in its activities.

A. Raison d'être

- affordable to all students
- enhances further foreign language studies
- provides motivation for students to move from visitor to student leader of the camp
- gives opportunity for staff involvement with exchange of ideas and cross-fertilization
- creates ésprit de corps among teachers
- provides setting for speaking the foreign language
- demonstrates benefits of foreign language study
- gives recognition to the student who has persisted in a five or six year language sequence

B. Planning

- select campsite
  - = most effective site has separate buildings for eating, activities and sleeping
- organize nucleus of key personnel
- establish framework of camp
- select cultural activities (eight) authentic to each language, which are included in the itinerary of each visitor

- delegate various tasks to staff
  = order supplies and printing
  = make signs and realia
  = design maps, mini-lessons, music books, student orientation handouts, etc.
  = set bus schedule for pick-ups

C. Format

- duration of camp (Friday evening to Sunday afternoon)
- hourly schedule of days' activities for 1) camp visitor, and 2) camp leader, including:
  = meal schedules
  = eight small group sessions with leaders
  = free time for café and boutique
  = total group activities (singing, dancing, skits, evening programs, etc.)
  = closing ceremonies and awards
- designate camp officialdom
  = mayor
  = police chief
  = president
  = religious personage
  = customs officials
- create traditions, rituals, history to give flavor to the camp
  = legends
  = origins of founder
  = history of village republic
- establish currency and create exchange rate for village money to be used in cafe and boutique
- select menus and instruct cook on preparation and appearance of foods

D. Goals

- total immersion in the foreign language
- exposure to an authentic cultural experience
- meaningful group experience for students
- increase desire for continuing foreign language study
- develop appreciation for foreign culture

III. Budget considerations

- establish cost per student based on the following:
  = cost of campsite
  = special food items (too difficult to be prepared by camp)
  = supplies for group activities
  = costumes for camp officials
  - boutique merchandise
  = printing of maps, guides, money, music, etc.
  = bus transportation

IV. Evaluation

- oral feedback
  = student comments
  = native speakers' reactions
  = teacher response
- staff evaluation meeting
  = highlights of camp
  = changes desired
  = weaknesses of camp
  = new ideas for next camp
- review slides taken at camp
  = student leaders give written reactions
  = travelers give written reactions
- data analysis
  = overall
  = breakdown by language group
  = breakdown by activity
    + overall
    + by language
- recommendations

Evaluation has clearly demonstrated the success of the foreign language camps. Evaluation results, both qualitative and quantitative, attest to the high level of quality and effectiveness of the camp experience. Based on the positive feedback from the evaluation processes, camps have continued since their initiation in 1969.

Teachers' comments include statements such as:

"Students receive a first-hand quality experience in an immersion situation in which they must use their foreign language in a practical and native-type environment."

"Teachers motivate students to enrich their linguistic bases in a foreign language based on the students' real experience in using the language of study."

Students' comments have also been very favorable:

"I realized how much more I have to learn."

"Since I can't afford to study in France, this is a great chance for me to experience the country."

"I really want to go to Spain now that I have tried El Pinar."

The evaluation process has not been carried out on an annual basis since the first camps in 1969. However, it has occurred randomly. Some years it was entirely qualitative in scope, and in others it was completed in a more quantitative manner. Because the results are received by each camp committee, formal research document results have not been annually compiled for all of the camps. However, such measures will commence this year. The research plan will include a statistical design that will provide for an analysis of each language camp individually, as well as the total effectiveness of all the camps. Individual factors will also be categorically assessed, such as noted on the evaluation instrument.

Increased accountability and program effectiveness necessitates such measures. It is felt that results will continue to demonstrate quality program effectiveness.

The Jefferson County model has been duplicated throughout the United States. The camps are self-supporting through a special camp account that was created from camp profits, and is used to continue the effort and other endeavors of foreign language study in Jefferson County Schools, such as student scholarships to attend camps.

Based on the national reputation of the Jefferson County Foreign Language Camps and their excellent self-supporting cost effectiveness, administration and teachers continue this effort with enthusiasm.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE CAMPS

EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

1	2	3	4	5
no	a little	ok	very much	extremely

1. Did you feel the camp was successful?
2. Did you enjoy trying to function in the foreign language?
3. Did you feel successful in functioning in the foreign language?
4. Did you like large group activities such as the singing, dancing, skit presentations, etc.?
5. Were the small group activities more to your liking?
6. Was your high school leader helpful?
7. Did you feel you spent a weekend in a foreign country?
8. Would you like to return to a foreign language camp?
9. Would you recommend it to a fellow student?
10. Has this camp experience increased your desire to continue studying your foreign language?

APPENDIX I

PLANNING HANDOUT

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT
JEFFERSON COUNTY SCHOOLS R-1
FOREIGN LANGUAGE CAMPS

R-1 foreign language teachers participate in the language immersion camps from the fall through early spring, conducting pre-planning group meetings and working as individuals on the following tasks:

1. Visitation of proposed camp site (an entire day).

2. Design and creation of props, realia, materials to create foreign language village atmosphere; e.g., making of signs, design of maps, updating of passports, issuance of passports, planning of foreign menus, identification of resources in Denver metropolitan area, arranging for films.

2. Planning of activities which the teachers will lead and/or train high school students to conduct at the camp, such as crafts and coats of arms.

4. Identification of costume needs, purchase of clothing to be worn by teachers.

5. Revision and/or updating of camp curriculum to be mailed out prior to camp to participating students; e.g., music, national anthem. Content of the curriculum addresses the language that students will utilize upon entering the foreign setting. Teachers in the classrooms or after school prepare their students for the camp experience. Teachers and students utilize the target language and exhibit the cultural behavior relating to the country. Opportunity is provided to interact with native speakers representative of the foreign countries.

6. Teachers arrive late afternoon on Friday. They work with high school students putting up signs, arranging logistics for the weekend's activities. Other teachers arrive on the buses with students, serving as chaperones. Teachers clear students through "customs" and serve as bankers in the exchange of American money to foreign exchange. Others arrange for native folk dancers, social activities, films, skits, etc.

7. At the conclusion of the camp, on Sunday afternoon, participate in a debriefing session, at which time we review evaluations submitted by students and make recommendations for the next year's camp. Teachers involved spend countless hours in pre-planning and carrying out activities, from Friday afternoon through Sunday afternoon at the camp site.

APPENDIX II

1982 FINANCIAL REPORTS

French Camp

Spanish Camp

Russian Camp

German Camp

FRENCH CAMP
May 14 -16, 1982
Deer Creek Christian Camp

95 students participated

TOTAL MONEY COLLECTED:----------$3,270.50

EXPENSES:

Advance to Barbara Johnson to replenish boutique items----------	$ 200.00	
Rental of Deer Creek Camp----------	1761.60	
Advance to Kathy Lutz for food supplies------	300.00	
Refunds for cancellations----------	163.00	
Vie de France for pastries----------	158.40	
Cara Anderson - supplies----------	47.00	
R-1 Transportation----------	365.20	
Jane Gallion - supplies----------	76.04	
Pam Seman - supplies----------	5.00	
Raoul Pirri - costumes ----------	86.00	

ADDITIONAL INCOME

Sales from boutique----------	456.25

REDEPOSITS:

Lutz returned ----------	207.15
Johnson returned----------	20.79
Deer Creek Camp returned overpayment----------	158.35
Applejack purchased back unused pop----------	28.35

TOTALS

EXPENSES---------- $3,162.24

INCOME plus Redeposits----------$4,141,39

BALANCE ON HAND ----------$ 979.15

SPANISH CAMP
April 23 - 25, 1982
Wild Basin Lodge

62 students participated

TOTAL MONEY COLLECTED:---------- $2,097.00

EXPENSES:

Refunds for cancellations----------	$ 56.00
R-1 Transportation----------	328.20
Wild Basin Lodge----------	1800.00
Tim Charney - purchased items in Mexico for store----	157.23
Jennie Green - supplies----------	200.00
Marcia Brown - supplies----------	34.88
Sonja Fry -supplies----------	71.37
	$2,647.68

Returned by Jennie Green---------- 72.75

$2,169.25

TOTALS:

EXPENSES----------	$2,647.68
INCOME plus redeposit----------	2,169.25
DEFICIT BALANCE----------	$ 478.43

RUSSIAN CAMP
MAY 7 - 9, 1982
LaFORET CAMP

45 Students participated *

TOTAL MONEY COLLECTED----------$1,439.15

EXPENSES:

Film Rental----------	$ 83.00
LaForet Rental----------	1,163.00
Jackie Tancredo -supplies-------	27.72
Marilyn Stechert - " -------	4.92
Cancellation refund----------	30.00
Buses----------	524.00
Burrous - phone calls ----------	9.75
	$ 1,842.39

DEFICIT BALANCE---------- $ 403.24

* Scott Townley has not yet paid

GERMAN CAMP
March 5 - 7, 1982
Deer Creek Christian Camp

70 students participated

TOTAL MONEY COLLECTED:---------- $2,125.00

EXPENSES:

Rental of Deer Creek----------	$1,484.00
Budget Films----------	50.70
Refunds for cancellations----------	168.00
R-1 Transportation----------	254.30
Ruth Wayman - Supplies----------	22.72
	$1,979.72

BALANCE AFTER EXPENSES---------- $ 145.28